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IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A hearing aid, comprising:
a microphone sampling position located externally of an ear canal of a user;
a receiver comprising a speaker positioned in an open ear configuration and suspended within the ear canal ~~of a user~~, wherein sound from the microphone sampling position is amplified and passed via electrical connection around a portion of the external ear and through the ear canal opening to the speaker that is positioned within the ear canal in an open ear configuration;
wherein said microphone sampling position and an amplifier are positioned within a behind the ear unit;
the receiver generating ~~no more than~~ about three decibels or below of insertion loss over a portion of the human ear audible frequencies.

2. (Currently Amended) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates ~~no more than~~ about two decibels or below of insertion loss over a portion of the human ear audible frequencies.

3. (Currently Amended) The hearing aid according to claim 2, wherein the receiver generates ~~no more than~~ about one decibels or below of insertion loss over a portion of the human ear audible frequencies.

4. (Currently Amended) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates ~~no more than~~ about three decibels or below of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 2200 Hertz and about 5300 Hertz.

5. (Currently Amended) The hearing aid according to claim 4, wherein the receiver generates ~~no more than~~ about three decibels or below of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 3000 Hertz and about 5000 Hertz.

6. (Currently Amended) The hearing aid according to claim 5, wherein the receiver generates ~~no more than~~ about three decibels or below of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 3500 Hertz and about 4500 Hertz.

7. (Currently Amended) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver is positioned within the bony and/or cartilaginous region of the ear canal of the user.

8. (Original) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver has a maximum lateral dimension that is less than half the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

9. (Original) The hearing aid according to claim 8, wherein the receiver has a maximum lateral dimension that is less than thirty percent of the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

10. (Original) The hearing aid according to claim 9, wherein the receiver has a maximum lateral dimension that is less than twenty percent of the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

11. (Original) The hearing aid according to claim 10, wherein the receiver has a maximum lateral dimension that is less than ten percent of the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

12. (Original) The hearing aid according to claim 11, wherein the receiver has a maximum lateral dimension that is less than five percent of the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

Claims 13-18 (Cancelled).

19. (Currently Amended) The hearing aid according to claim 1, ~~further comprising a sound processing unit; and~~ wherein the electrical connection comprises an intermediate connecting portion, wherein a retaining ~~wire~~ member extends from at least one of the intermediate connecting portion and the receiver, and further wherein the retaining ~~wire~~ member is configured to engage at least a portion of the concha of a user's ear.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously Amended) The hearing aid according to claim 19, wherein the retaining ~~wire~~ member is configured such that the receiver has a maximum insertion depth into an ear canal.

22. (Previously Amended) The hearing aid according to claim 19, wherein the retaining ~~wire~~ member is configured such that the receiver does not substantially contact any portion of an ear canal when inserted within the ear canal.

23. (Previously Amended) The hearing aid according to claim 19, wherein the retaining ~~wire~~ member stabilizes the receiver in the ear canal.

24. (Currently Amended) The hearing aid according to claim19, wherein the retaining ~~wire~~ member prevents ~~any~~ movement of the receiver in the ear canal.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the ~~receiver comprises a~~ speaker~~,~~ is at least partially enclosed within a casing having first and second end portions, the first end portion communicating with an intermediate connecting portion, the speaker communicating with a port provided at the second end portion of the casing.

27. (Previously Amended) The hearing aid according to claim 26, wherein the port is at least partially sealed to debris by a membrane or mesh material.

28. (Previously Amended) The hearing aid according to claim 27, wherein the casing is sealed to debris at the first end portion and along a length of the casing extending from the first end portion to the port.

29. (Original) The hearing aid according to claim 26, wherein the port includes a removable cerumen collector.

Claims 30-34 (Cancelled).

35. (Currently Amended) The hearing aid according to claim ~~30~~ 1, ~~further comprising a sound processing unit; and~~ wherein the electrical connection comprises an intermediate connecting portion including at least two electrical conducting components provided within the intermediate connecting portion, wherein the at least two electrical conducting components are provided within at least two channels at least partially isolated from one another.

36. (Currently Amended) A hearing aid, comprising:
a microphone sampling position located externally of an ear canal of a user;
a receiver ~~configured to be~~ comprising a speaker positioned in an open ear configuration and suspended within ~~a user's~~ the ear canal ~~of a user~~, wherein sound from the microphone sampling position is amplified and passed via electrical connection around a portion of the external ear and through the ear canal opening to the speaker that is positioned within the ear canal in an open ear configuration;
wherein said microphone sampling position and an amplifier are positioned within a behind the ear unit;

the receiver having a maximum lateral dimension that is less than ~~thirty~~ fifty percent of the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

37. (Currently Amended) The hearing aid according to claim 36, wherein the receiver has a maximum lateral dimension that is less than ~~twenty~~ forty percent of the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

38. (Currently Amended) The hearing aid according to claim 36, wherein the receiver has a maximum lateral dimension that is less than ~~ten~~ thirty percent of the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

39. (Cancelled)

40. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The hearing aid according to claim 1, comprising: wherein the electrical connection comprises an intermediate connecting portion, ~~wherein the intermediate connecting portion comprises~~ comprising an electrical conducting component and a stiffening ~~wire~~ member, provided on or in at least a portion of the intermediate connecting portion.

41. (Cancelled)

42. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates about three decibels or below of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 1000 Hertz and about 2500 Hertz.

43. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates about three decibels or below of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 1500 Hertz and about 2500 Hertz.

44. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates about

three decibels or below of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 1500 Hertz and about 2000 Hertz.

45. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates about three decibels or below of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 1500 Hertz and about 1800 Hertz.

46. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates about three decibels or below of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 2000 Hertz and about 3500 Hertz.

47. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates about three decibels or below of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 2500 Hertz and about 3000 Hertz.

48. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates about three decibels or below of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 3000 Hertz and about 4000 Hertz.

49. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates about three decibels or below of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 3000 Hertz and about 3500 Hertz.

50. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates about three decibels or below of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 3500 Hertz and about 4000 Hertz.

51. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates about three decibels or below of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 3500 Hertz and about 5000 Hertz.

52. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates about three decibels or below of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 4000 Hertz and about 4500 Hertz.

53. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates about three decibels or below of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 4500 Hertz and about 5000 Hertz.

54. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver is positioned within the cartilaginous region of the ear canal of the user.

55. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver is suspended within and away from the walls of the ear canal.

56. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 36, wherein the receiver is positioned within the cartilaginous region of the ear canal of the user.

57. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 36, wherein the receiver is suspended within and away from the walls of the ear canal.

58. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 19, wherein the retaining member is a wire.

59. (New) The hearing aid according to claim 40, wherein the stiffening member is a wire.